



ALAMEDA COUNTY COVID-19 HEALTH EMERGENCY PRESS RELEASE

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA ★ CALIFORNIA

Office of Emergency Services
4985 Broder Blvd, Dublin, CA 94568

Alameda County Health Care Services Agency

UPDATED
May 16, 2020

Neetu Balram, Public Information Manager
Alameda County Public Health Department

Alameda County Increases COVID-19 Testing with Three New Community Testing Sites

Sites aim to reduce disparities in ongoing partnerships with cities, community health and faith organizations, the State of California and lab partners

ALAMEDA COUNTY – Alameda County announced the launch of three free testing sites scheduled to open within this week as part of the larger strategy to address inequities in access to testing. More are planned in the coming weeks. The three new sites will offer testing free of charge and will be located in:

East Oakland:

- Allen Temple Baptist Church, a drive-through and walk-up site, launching Monday, May 18 in partnership with the City of Oakland, CORE, and Verily Life Sciences; make an appointment at <https://www.projectbaseline.com/study/covid-19/>
- Roots Community Health Center, a walk-up site that launched May 6th in partnership with the City of Oakland, CORE and Verily Life Sciences; make an appointment at <https://rootsclinic.org/covid-19-testing/> but pre-registration is not required.

Ashland Cherryland:

- REACH Youth Center, a walk-up site launched May 11, in partnership with OptumServe

Hayward

- ~~Alameda County offices at 224 W Winton Ave, a walk-up site launching mid-late week of May 11, in partnership with OptumServe~~ **CANCELLED**

Following Governor Gavin Newsom’s recent announcement to add more than 80 community testing sites across the state focused on underserved communities, the REACH site launched May 11 in partnership with OptumServe. This site has the flexibility to move to other areas of Alameda County to serve other communities that lack access to local testing for COVID-19.

Testing is by appointment only and additional information is available on the Alameda County Public Health website. Make an appointment at <https://lhi.care/covidtesting>

To determine where to locate new testing sites, the State evaluated underserved areas for known disparities and median income. The County then overlaid its own data, including case rates by race and ethnicity, and leveraged partnerships with community-based organizations and clinics to ensure appropriate follow-up care and other resources.

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“The COVID-19 crisis has shown us that once again our communities of color are experiencing health disparities. Ongoing testing and reporting show that Latinx, African American, and Pacific Islander communities have higher rates of chronic disease. Unfortunately, members of these same communities are also more likely to live in situations that make it difficult to maintain physical distancing or sheltering in place. We have to stay focused on these disparities when facing this pandemic,” said Supervisor Nate Miley, whose district includes two of the new sites.

Testing will be available to health care, front line, or essential workers and anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms including cough, fever, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat or a new loss of taste or smell.

The additional three sites expand Alameda County locations to 30 with capacity to conduct 600 additional tests per day. This more than doubles the county’s capacity over a month ago and is a big step toward the estimated 3,100 tests per day needed to meet the testing goal set by the County to determine progress toward sufficient testing capacity.

“These new sites help Alameda County dramatically expand testing for individuals who previously had limited access,” said Colleen Chawla, Director of the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency. “The public private partnerships and collaboration with the State, cities across Alameda County, and local faith and community organizations makes it possible to advance community health while meeting our County’s testing goals to help us manage the pandemic and reduce the spread of COVID-19.”

Increased access to testing is a cornerstone of Alameda County’s COVID-19 response strategy, which includes contact tracing to identify cases early, and health and social supports for people who need to isolate or quarantine. The County is also serving as a resource to provide much needed testing supplies to clinics, hospitals and other entities, like Skilled Nursing Facilities, that serve vulnerable populations in order to equip more sites to test effectively and support increased access.

“A better understanding of how COVID-19 is impacting the County’s residents is critically important and lays the foundation for focusing resources and interventions where most needed,” said Dr. Jocelyn Freeman Garrick, Deputy Medical Director for Emergency Medical Services for Alameda County and lead for COVID-19 testing. “Promoting health equity by working directly with communities with poor social determinants of health is integral to the work Alameda County Public Health does.”

“Given the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black and Brown communities nationally and locally, it is an ethical and moral imperative that access to testing be made available in these traditionally underserved communities,” said Reverend Dr. Jacqueline A. Thompson, Senior Pastor at Allen Temple

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Baptist Church. “Allen Temple Baptist Church has a long history of serving God by serving the people of God, particularly those that are often overlooked. We look forward to the opportunity to work with our city, county and nonprofit partners to meet this critical need.”

MEDIA CONTACTS AT:

- Allen Temple Baptist Church, Minister Charlotte Williams: 510-604-5242
- Roots Community Health Center, Jamaica Sowell: jamaica@rootsclinic.org
- City of Oakland, Sean Maher: SMaher@oaklandca.gov
- REACH site, Neetu Balram: eoc-pio@acgov.org

MORE INFORMATION:

- [Governor Newsom announcement](#) to expand community testing in underserved areas
- <https://www.coreresponse.org/covid19>
- www.optumserve.com
- <https://verily.com/>
- <http://www.acphd.org/2019-ncov/testing.aspx>

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